THE ART OF
NO NORTH
RAQUEL M. SIMOSO
AVENTURA

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH AND BEGINNING OF THE NEXT!

From the howling peaks to the endless deserts, a duo of opposite canine friends dare to face the unknown in order to free a town from a mysterious curse. That is just the beginning of the fantastic and strange adventure told in Raquel Simoso's upcoming comic, ***No North***.

Featuring over 250 illustrations from *Up and Ahead*, *Shut Eye* and the making of *No North*, the following pages are packed with concept art, characters, lore and sneak peeks of what the future comic holds in store!

This book is dedicated to you, the adventurer who dares to face the unknown and reach greater heights.

Thank you for believing in my work and in my journey. Because of you, I am now ready to climb the next mountain.

SUMMARY

The Early Concept	**7**
Steban Eveler's Origins	9
Martin Longbark's Origins	10
The Duo	12
The Pre-Pilot	**17**
Up and Ahead	**19**
Shut Eye	**23**
No North	**25**
The Town	35
The Desert	61
The Wilderness	81
The Unknown	105
The Showdown	111

THE EARLY CONCEPT

Back in 2011, the first idea for *Up and Ahead* and the future *No North* was created. Combining the Western Genre with dog characters created a fun concept and setting for a story to develop. Steban, the traveler and adventurer, seemed to come naturally as one of the protagonists, as well as his partner, Martin, who's the absolute opposite of him. Being the brain of the duo, Martin is always one step ahead of Steban when it comes to precaution, but always one step behind when it comes to stopping his friend from going into another ludicrous adventure!

For robbery and cold-blooded murder
Billy Picard
$ 20000
REWARD
Skailla 2012

STEBAN EVELER'S ORIGINS

Steban started out as a renegade and borderline outlaw character. Inspired by classic western movies such as *The Good the Bad and the Ugly* and *Django*, he was a loner dog who lived by his own rules. The general looks were already with him right from the start: the red bandana, the hat and the German Shepherd dog features, however, he used to smoke and actually carry two pistols!

His personality was also more independent, authoritarian and aggressive, but he slowly turned into a quirky traveler moved by curiosity and the excitement of exploring the world around him.

Today, Steban is a character who lives by his idealism and wanderlust, always collecting stories of the places he visits and dogs he meets. He seems to see only the good in every situation, making him a hopeless optimist and a very naive trouble-magnet.

MARTIN LONGBARK'S ORIGINS

From his very first concept, Martin has always been an introvert who makes sure to look before he leaps. As his early self, he was a shy and romantic writer who accompanied Steban on his adventures out of worry for his friend's trouble-seeking tendencies.

This gradually gave way to a very grumpy, stubborn and entitled (failed) comedian, becoming the absolute opposite of his friend.

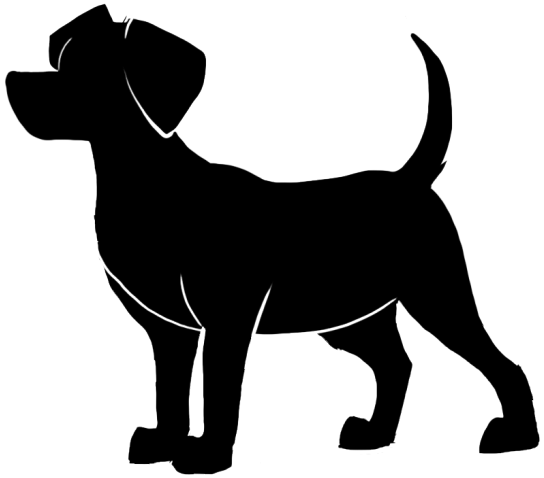
Today, Martin's personality grew softer and deeper than his former selves, but he still holds a negative world view and a skeptic approach to life. He is always realistic, avoiding to have his expectations broken because of foolish idealisms. He balances out Steban by being centered and strategical, and not jumping into situations out of impulse.

THE DUO

Steban and Martin's personalities are not the only thing about them that is complementary: their silhouette is also what makes the duo so comically opposite.

Aiming for iconic and recognizable designs, they were shaped in order to bring out their most important personality traits into their appearance.

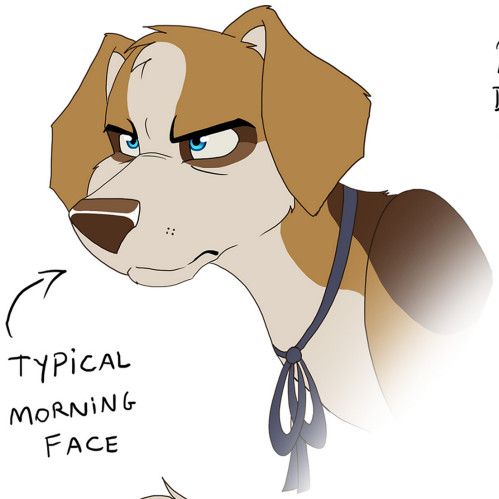
Steban, being energetic, idealistic and optimistic, is mostly made out of triangles and flaming shapes flowing upwards, positively. Martin's shapes, however, are round and stagnated, reflecting his stubborn and rational personality. Together, the duo is recognizable for their contrasting and funny differences, much like Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.



STEBAN

Steban is a wanderer and adventurer, but some claim he's just a bum. He roams the land looking for dogs to befriend and stories to share. Ha has seen and lived through more strange things than he usually admits.

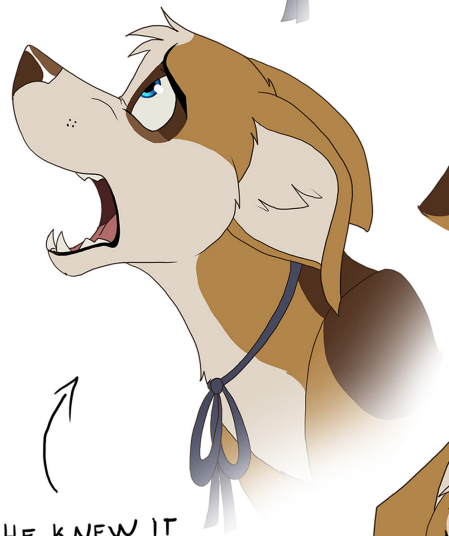
MARTIN



TYPICAL MORNING FACE

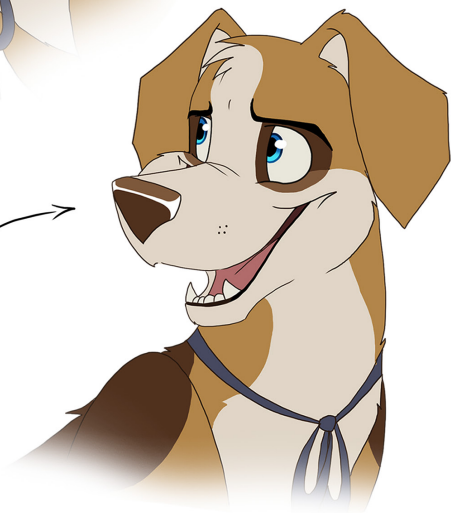
PROBABLY HIGHLY DISAPPROVING ONE OF STEBAN'S "PLANS"

GUILT TRIPPIN'



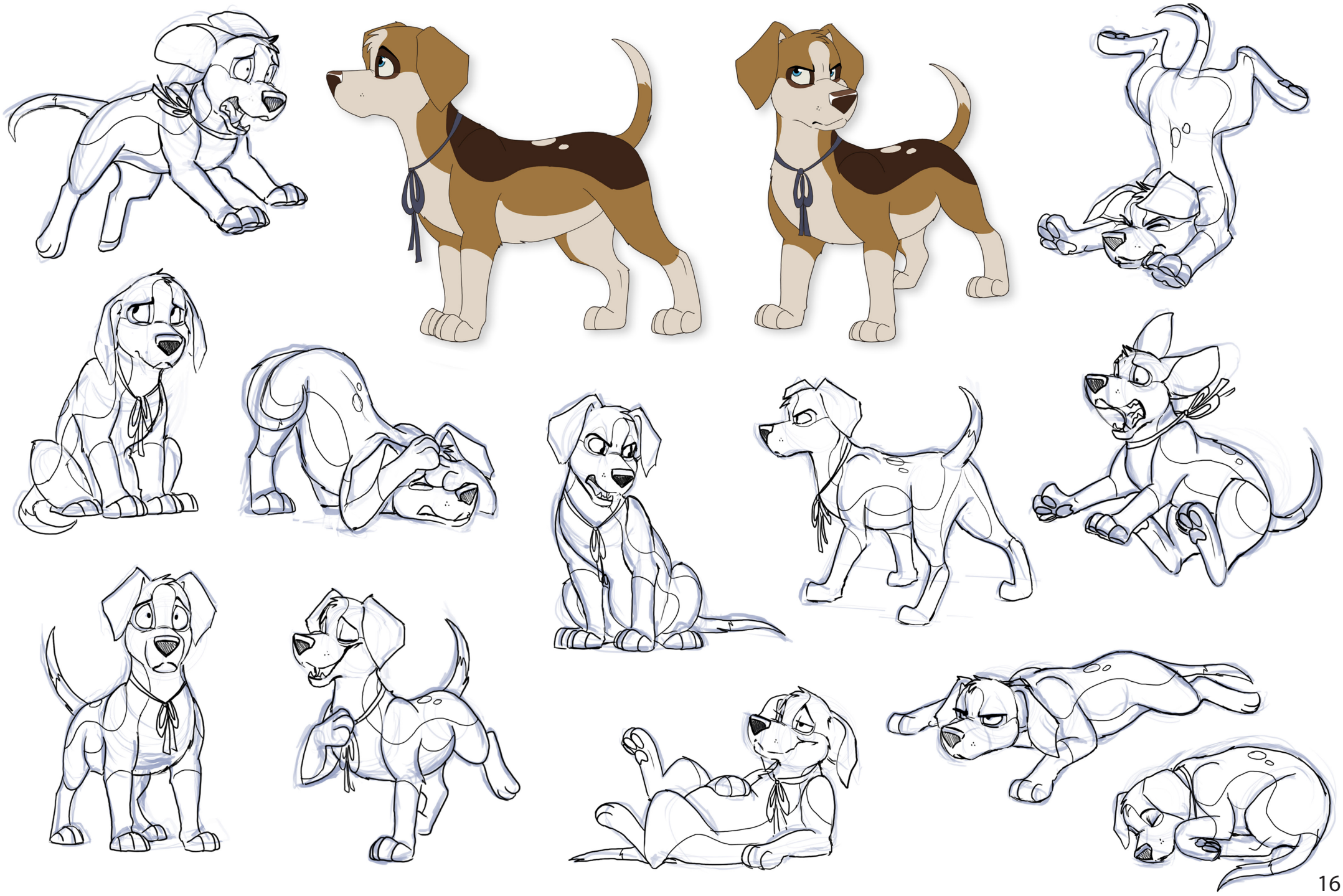
HE KNEW IT WOULD GO WRONG AND IT DID!

AMAZED BY SOMETHING WONDERFUL



ACTUALLY HAPPY WHEN IN HARMONY

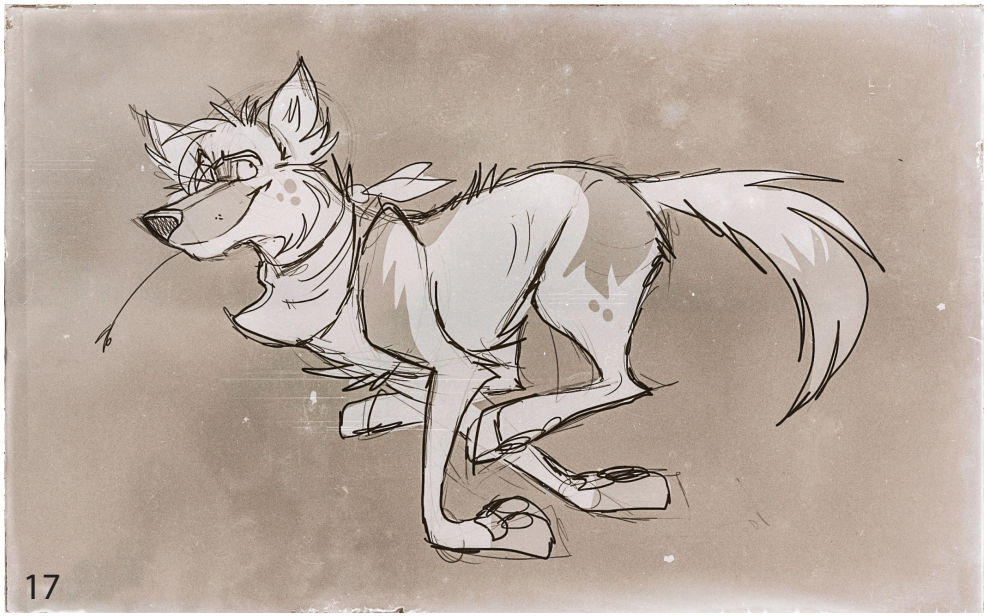
Martin is an aspiring writer who seems to be on a string of bad luck ever since he was born. Searching non-stop for his so wanted fame and recognition, his bumpy road might lead him where he least expects it.



THE BEGINNING

Up and Ahead was created to be the pilot and beginning of the duo's adventure, but before the comic could started being effectively drawn, a short pre-pilot was designed to test out the art style. It illustrated a typical scene in the story where Delilah, Steban, Hank and Martin had been captured by Jenkins and Medora, two dangerous outlaws who also had a bad history with the trouble-lurking adventurer.

The eight-paged comic was never finished, only lasting for three pages, but they proved enough to guarantee *Up and Ahead*'s art style would work.



Skailla 2013

Skailla 2013

UP AND AHEAD

In 2013 the comic's production officially started. Featuring the first adventure of Steban and Martin, the story follows the beagle's journey to Gold Marrow, the troubles he got into while trying to work with his biggest idol and how he met the crazy adventurer who would turn his life upside down: Steban.

The comic featured many characters and a short plot to start their adventure. *Up and Ahead*'s sequels would later feature short tales where Steban and Martin met other townsfolk, outlaws, wolf packs, supernatural forces and everything in between.

During its running time of three years (2013-2016), the pilot was read by many people on the website DeviantArt. In 2018 it was successfully funded at the crowdfunding platform *IndieGoGo* for a printed version.

COMIC'S PANEL PROCESS

CHABOT - FAMOUS WRITER

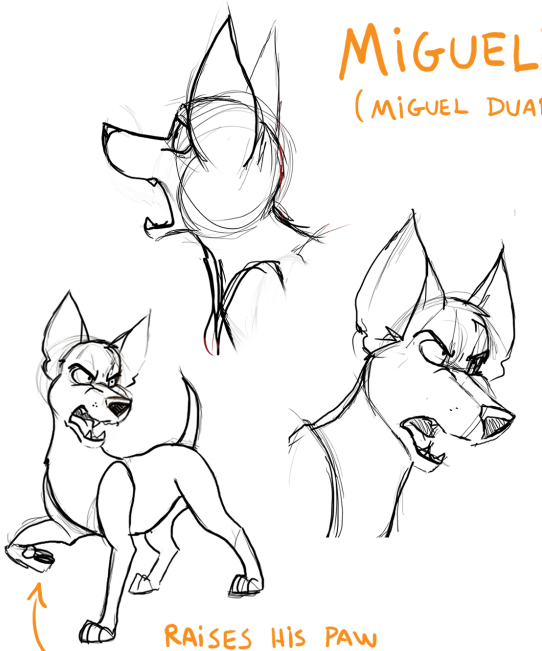
(ERNEST CHABOT)

↳ HE WROTE SHERLOCK BONES!

LESTER - XERIFE

MIGUELITO - ASSOCIATED

(MIGUEL DUARTE)



MARGARET - SALOON OWNER

BUTCH - HENCHDOG

GUS - HENCHDOG

ROUKAN - OUTLAW

SHUT EYE

With a strong inspiration from songs, *Up and Ahead*'s concept slowly dived deeper into less explored territories.

In 2017 the animatic *Shut Eye* was developed, illustrating the song by the same name from the group *Stealing Sheep*. The short story featured one of Steban's strange adventures before he arrived in Gold Marrow. Lost in the desert and barely conscious from the heat, he arrives in a strange town forgotten by time. Warned by one of the townsfolk about a dangerous entity who possessed everyone who lived there, he's told to catch the passing train in order to keep his soul. In the midst of frustrated attempts, Steban ends up getting tangled with the Devil herself. The animatic is available at the YouTube channel **Raquel Simoso [Skailla]**.

Shut Eye's first concepts and ideas were developed in 2013, the same year as *Up and Ahead*'s production began . The general lore, story and characters were very similar to the 2017 animatic, with only a few exceptions: the Devil, for example, used to be a Belgian Shepherd witch who decided to take over a whole town.

This story was supposed to be one of the short tales told along *Up and Ahead*'s running time, regarding Steban's strange and somewhat hidden past adventures.

NO NORTH

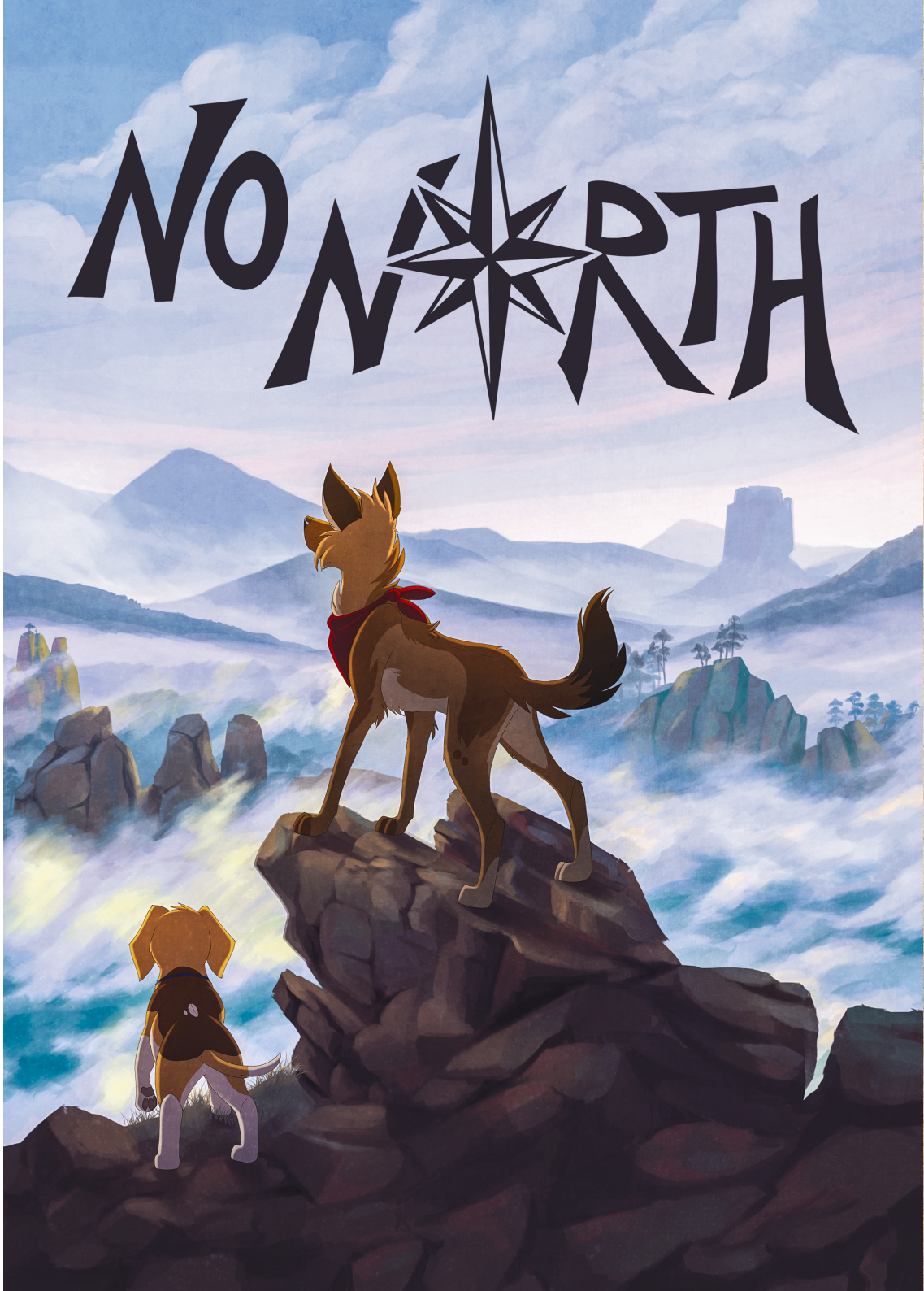
Both *Up and Ahead* and *Shut Eye* helped shape a brand new concept featuring the unlikely duo of adventurers. This new horizon embraces the original dynamic and western themes seen in the pilot, combined with the weird and dream-like aspects of the animatic.

Walking through the strange roads and unknown places of the earth, *No North* tells the tales of Steban and Martin's journey following a mysterious north-less compass in order to free a town from a curse.

Combining the two previous concepts, *No North* focuses even more on the weird and supernatural happenings that tend to occur on secluded towns forgotten by time, and the wonders that hide beyond nameless forests and ancient rivers.

With a wide range of characters, storylines, lore and settings, what follows in this book will be just a small taste of what's coming ahead for *No North*. Many of the concepts and ideas are still in an early stage of development and might still undergo many changes, but you'll be the first to dive into this new adventure!

We hope you enjoy the ride!

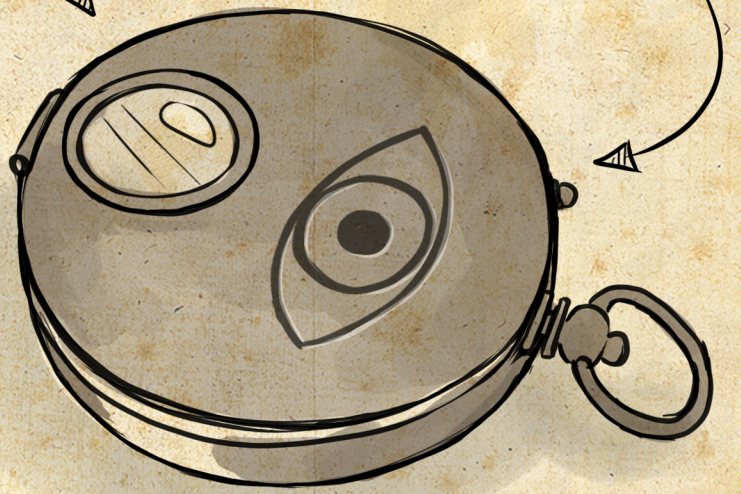


THE NORTH-LESS COMPASS

A needle that doesn't point north and is always changing directions

Crystal lens

Mysterious eye drawn on the cover



After finding a mysterious compass that doesn't point north, two completely opposite friends come together to find its true destiny.

Steban, an optimistic mutt with no sense of danger, and Martin, a pessimistic beagle writer, embark on a strange and fascinating journey around the cursed town of Oddwind.

But little do they know of the dangers hidden
in the lands of the unknown.

NO NORTH

THE HOWLING PEAKS
BULL KING'S LAIR
STRANGER'S LAKE
WOLVES' TERRITORY
OLD JOE'S HUT
LONESOME CAVES
SCORPION'S EXCAVATION
ODDWIND

35

ODDWIND

Oddwind is a town at the edge of what is known. Much like the former Gold Marrow, it lies in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by deserts and unexplored forests. Many dogs believe the place is cursed, for anyone who ever tried to leave mysteriously disappeared. Even with a bad reputation, the dogs of Oddwind work hard to make their town a good home for everyone, even if this means fighting off outlaws and surviving through supernatural curses!

WEEKLY

Javier Hunter's expedition disappears without a trace

Today marks the second week of search for the lost expedition. No trace has been found of the archaeologist and explorer Javier Hunter and his 50 dogs, who were heading into the great unknown in hopes of bringing back riches and discover a new frontier.

r camp was still set but believed to been raided by the outlaw gang esert Scorpions, whoever, no of foul play has been found. awson, the town's sheriff, y have nothing to do with ances.

anished into plain air. explanation for this. ch parties involved. this town has to

The picture ows the last place the expediti n w en.

Mayor om, wh stood against the expedition befo they even left, believes they have made a fatal mistake. "These dogs played with forces they shouldn't have messed with, and I just pray our town won't pay a high price for their irresponsible actions".

THE RED SKY SALOON

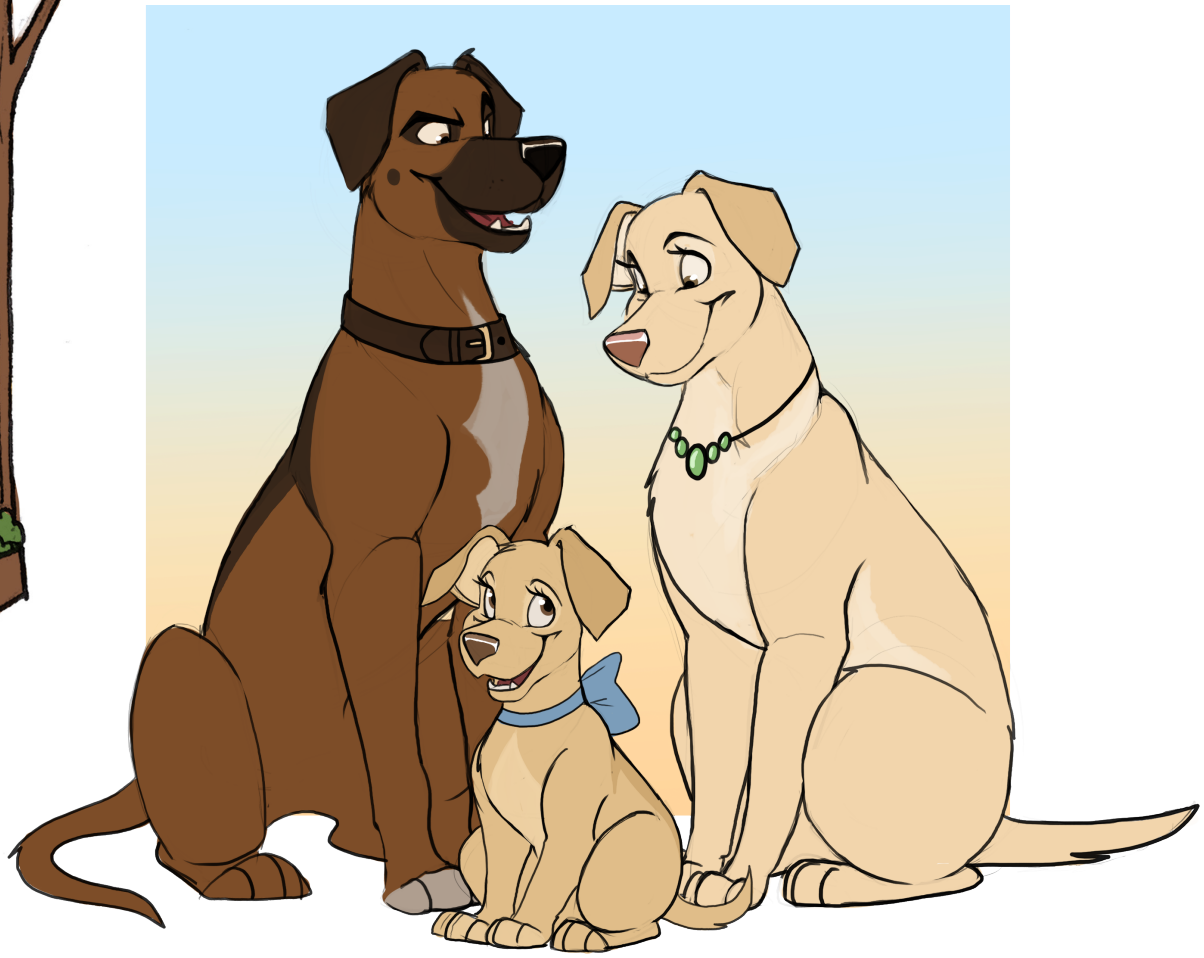
Owned and managed with an iron fist by Margaret, the Red Sky Saloon is the perfect spot for gamblers and troublemakers to meet and play cards, pool, and brag loudly about their lives, wasting the lazy days away.

When it comes to starting trouble, two dogs are local professionals: Steban and Chase. Either because of Chases' urges to cheat on poker or Steban's sharp tongue and noseyness, Margaret is always the one who must find a way to break up the fights before they end up damaging her whole establishment. She hardly ever succeeds. The poor corgi is always stressed beyond her mind, and with a good reason!

THE BLACKSMITH

Warren, Oddwind's blacksmith, is a tough dog with a big heart. He is very devoted to his wife, Elle, and his only daughter, April. He and his family took Steban in when he first arrived in town, out of pity for the wanderer. They let him stay at the attic with one condition: he'd pay for it with either money or work.

Steban proved to be a disaster working at the smithy and is always too broke to pay his rent. To avoid confrontation with Warren, he usually leaves through the attic's window!



THE ATTIC ROOM

Home to the weird souvenirs from Steban's many travels, the once old and dusty room is now filled with quirky objects and creative fixes for the broken furniture. Although very messy, the attic is filled with curious stories hidden in every little corner.

ODDWIND DOGS

CHASE QUIKLEY

Professional gambler and trickster, Chase only knows how to get through when he's cheating. His lack of morality and self-worth is badly seen by other dogs in town, but it doesn't seem to bother him. He was supposed to be the caretaker of his three nephews, Marsha, Danny and Sherry, but he can hardly take care of himself. Besides his wrong doings, Chase loves them very much, but simply can't seem to bring himself to do right.

LESTER LAWSON

Oddwind couldn't be in more responsible paws than Lester's, the town's sheriff. With his intense sense of duty and what some would call compulsive view on organization, he plans on keeping his town as tidy and peaceful as dogly possible. He works day and night when an investigation comes up, side by side with his deputy, Faye, who he has a secret crush on. He can't stand trouble-makers and is known to be very hard on them.

- EVELEEER!

FAYE FREERUN

Charming, lazy and headstrong, Faye became the town's Deputy for the thrill of it. As the complete opposite of Lester, she is a witty and laid-back saluki who hates paperwork and would trade anything for adventure – or a chance to escape work and the boredom of her small town.

BALTAZAR AUSTERN

Part of the small but influential elite of Oddwind, Baltazar is the only member of his blue blooded family who's still alive. He is very concerned about his town and thinks Mayor Tom does a poor job at taking action for its problems. He's admired by the townsfolk for his nobility, discipline and courage, and he's capable of doing absolutely anything if it means reaching the right objective.

DELILAH MOREL

Born a noble, Delilah is the fourth daughter of a once rich family. Artistic, charming and idealistic to the core, her personality always clashed with her strict environment. Regaining their old status meant everything to her mother, and the perfect opportunity appeared when Baltazar visited her town to restore old ties between their families. Eager for all the riches the union could bring, her mother pushed her into a relationship with him. Following her soon-to-be fiancé, Delilah left the comfort of the city life for the wild frontier.

YOU CRAZY SWINE!

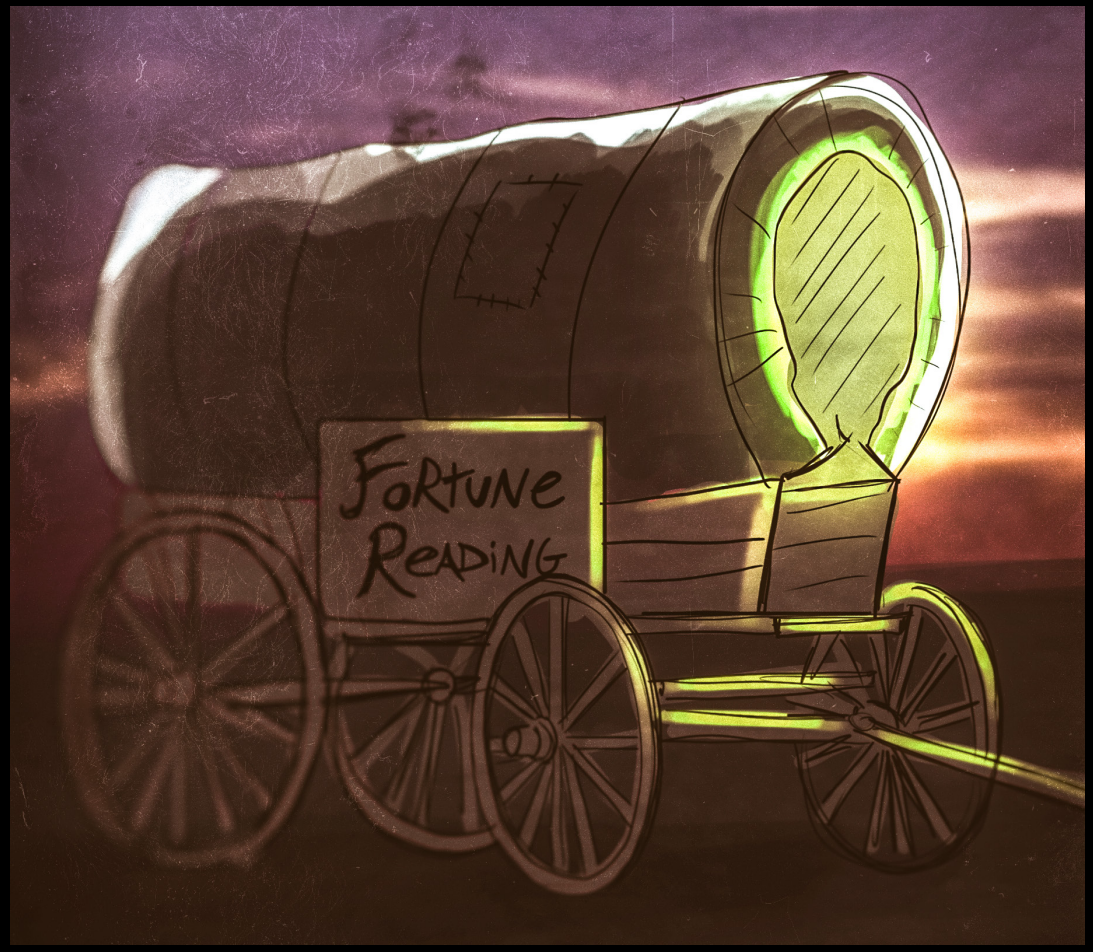
SKaillea
2017

Come now,
you can't go out
there like *that!*

THE FORTUNETELLER

A poor fortuneteller roams the dusty streets of Oddwind looking for souls to guide and destinies to read. Forgotten by everyone who lives there, she spends her days in the shadows of her old wagon.

What could the unfortunate fortuneteller be looking for?



SKaillen
2018

Don't just write it, Shorty. Let's go *live* the greatest story ever!
SKaille 2017

THAT WENT WELL, HM?

C'MON, YOU CAN DO IT!

YOU'D MAKE FOR A GREAT RABBIT, SHORTY!

THE GREATEST ADVENTURE IS OUT THERE FOR US TO GO
LIVE IT!
CAN WE AT LEAST "LIVE IT" AFTER LUNCH?

I'VE HEARD BAD DECISIONS MAKE THE BEST STORIES...
YES, IT CAN BE TRUE, BUT...
HEY! YOU CAN'T USE THIS AS AN EXCUSE TO MAKE THEM!
STEBAN!

THE DESERT

THE ENDLESS HORIZON

Ever since the first concept, the desert has always been the main setting for the story. Not only for being part of the classic western genre, but because of its broad horizons and apparent endlessness. It's either a wasteland or a place of infinite possibilities. It's untamed, unconquerable and challenging for any traveler who dares to explore it.

Steban and Martin will visit this setting many times during *No North*, either following the compass' needle or running from dangerous outlaws hidden within the countless canyons.

SKaille
2016

Yeah. But one day you just left and never came back, like none of this meant anything to you.

IS IT TOO BAD?

HOW ARE YOU STILL ALIVE? I MEAN... HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO NOT DIE YET?!
SHORTY!

Shorty! You're writing our story!
Give me that BACK!

Come on, Deli!
It's Ms. Morel to you, Eveler.

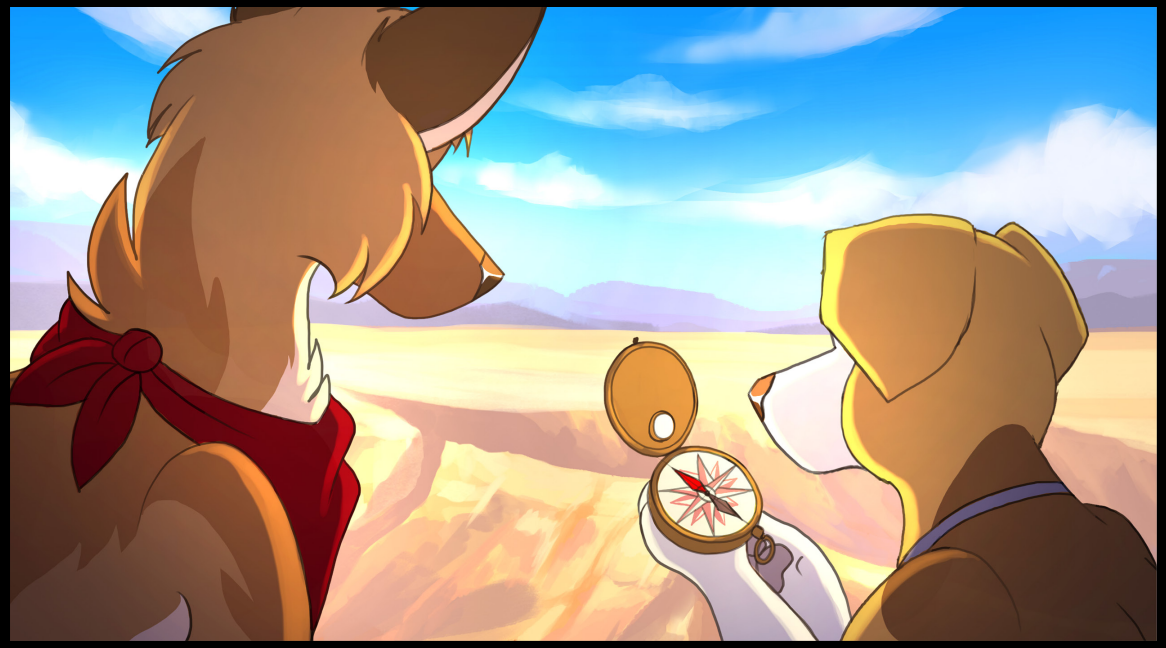
Morel? Isn't that... A mushroom?

Ms. Mushie!

How about Mushroom? Fungus? Funggie?
...Fungroom?

THE LONESOME CAVE

Trying to figure out a way around the mighty canyons, Steban and Martin come across a supposed “shortcut”. Hidden in the middle of the desert lies a mysterious cave at the edge of the unknown, a strange passageway to what seems to be a world of dreams. Our travelers have no idea what that place is, and maybe they never will. The unknown has much in store, and perhaps some things are just meant to remain a beautiful secret.



THE
BULL
KING
RAQUEL
SIMOSO

THE BULL KING

Many legends surround the king of the desert, for few have ever seen him and lived to tell the tale. Some say he cannot die, and some say he came back from the underworld, seeking revenge. He leads an infamous pack of coyotes who worship him, known as the Herd, who'd go to the ends of the earth following their vengeful leader.

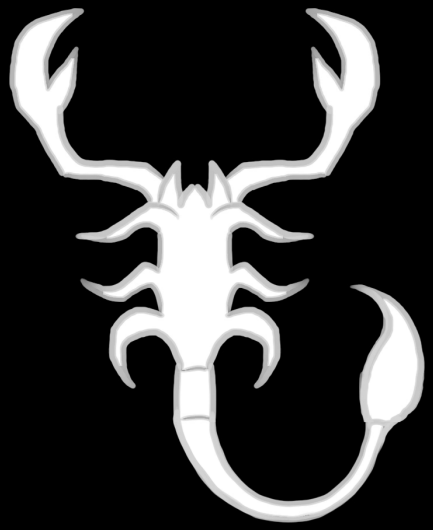
Kalf is the youngest coyote in the pack. No one knows who his parents are, so he follows the Bull King around like his second shadow, despite the King's distant nature.

THE INFAMOUS HERD

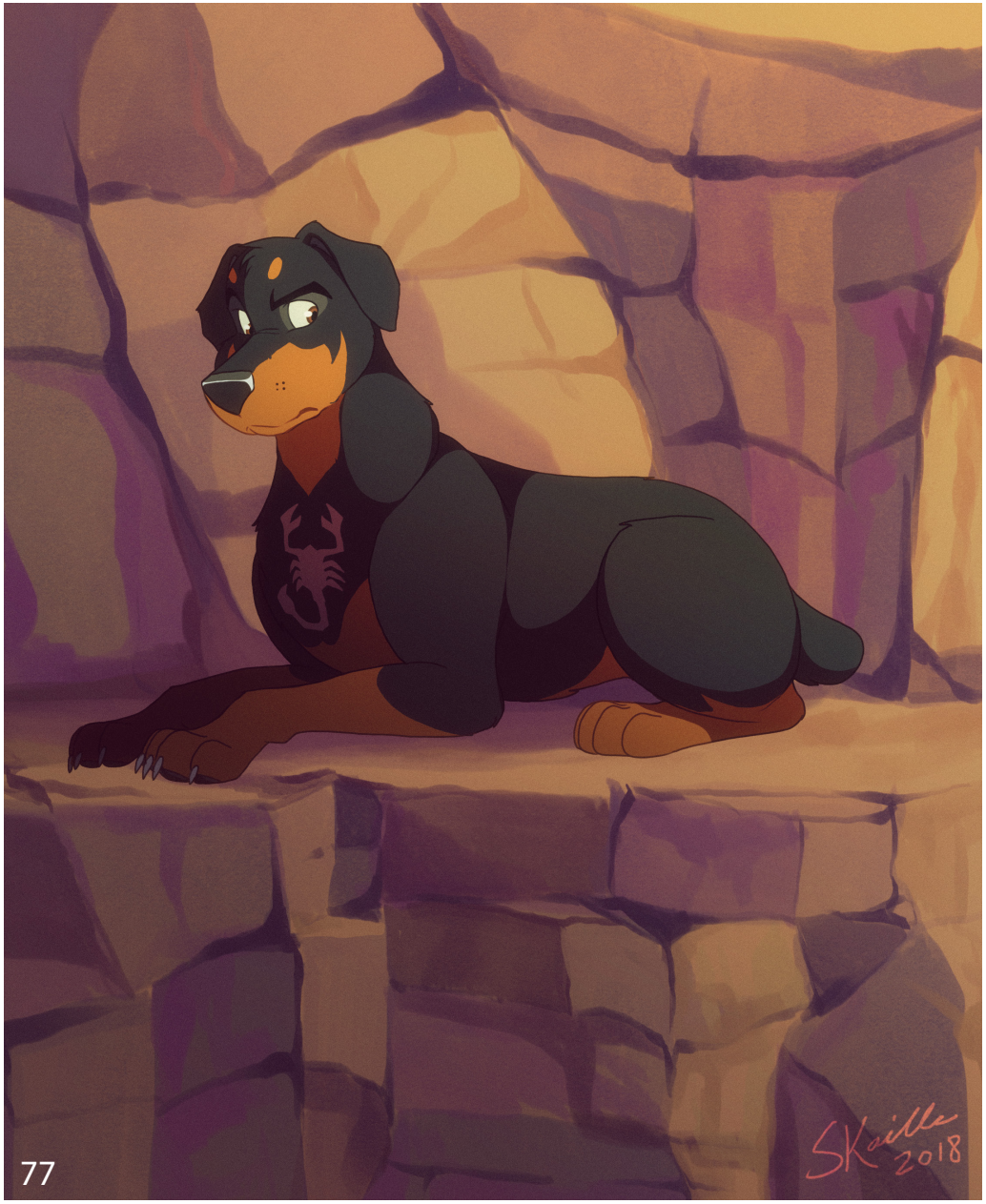
THE DESERT SCORPIONS

Terror of the deserts, this clan of outlaws spread fear in every helpless town haunted by their presence. Unlike the Infamous Herd, who sometimes remains unheard from for years, the Scorpions are always out raiding and conquering territories, expending their reign of dread.

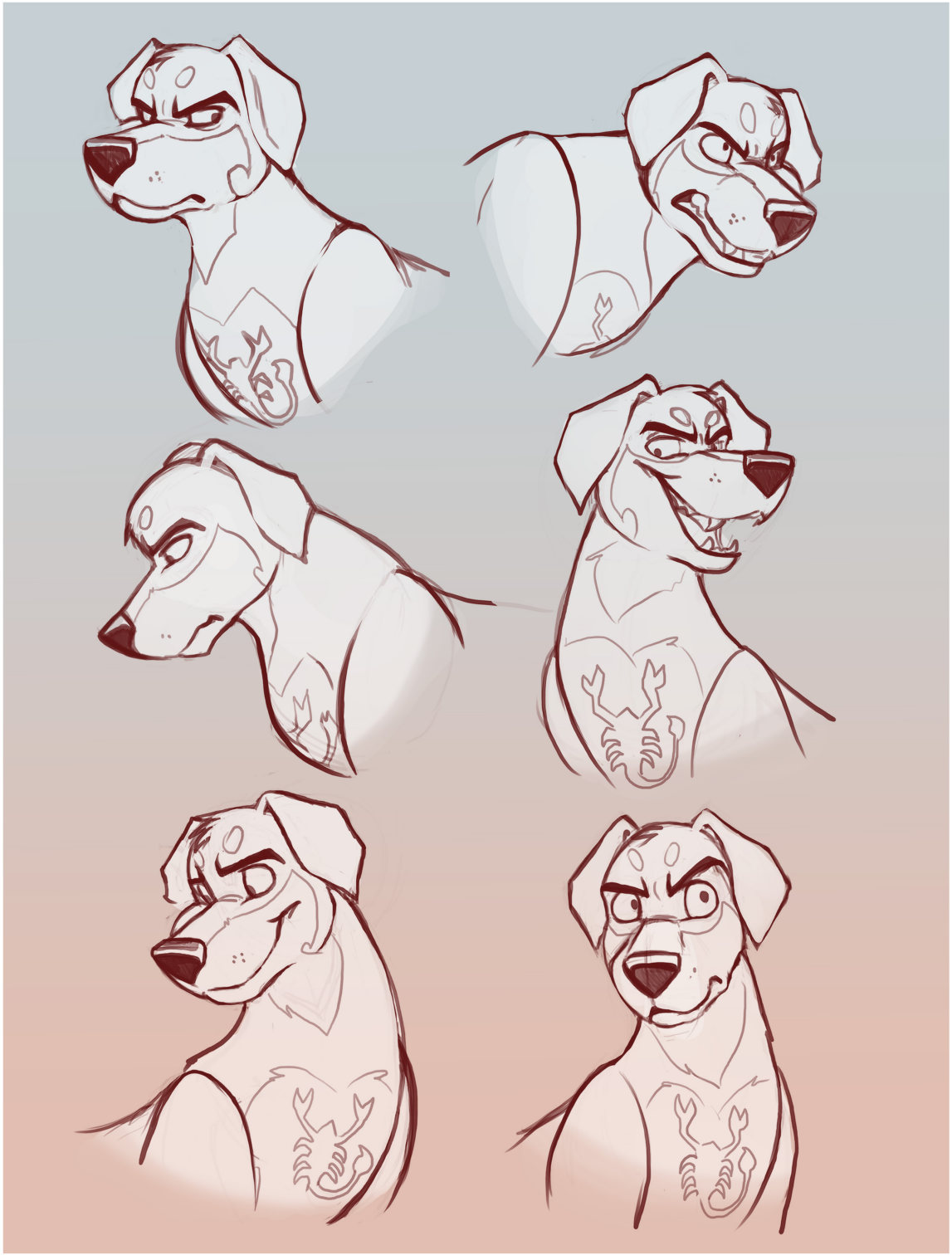
The clan is lead by Vernon, one of the most feared and cruel outlaws to ever roam the deserts. Stories tell that his bite is as venous as a scorpion's or a cobra's. He is set on finding the north-less compass for mysterious reasons, and will destroy anything that stands in his way of getting it.



HANK HUNTER



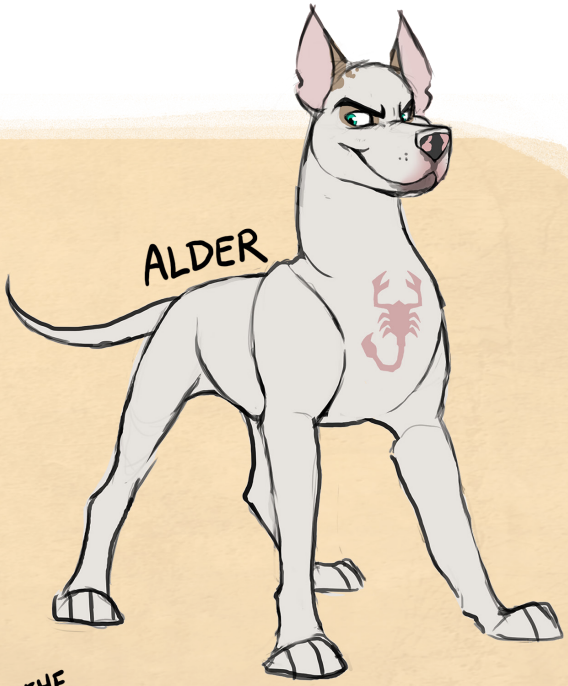
Hank is the second in command of the Scorpions and one of the most feared outlaws. He is, however, conflicted between following the Scorpion's ways or his own principals.

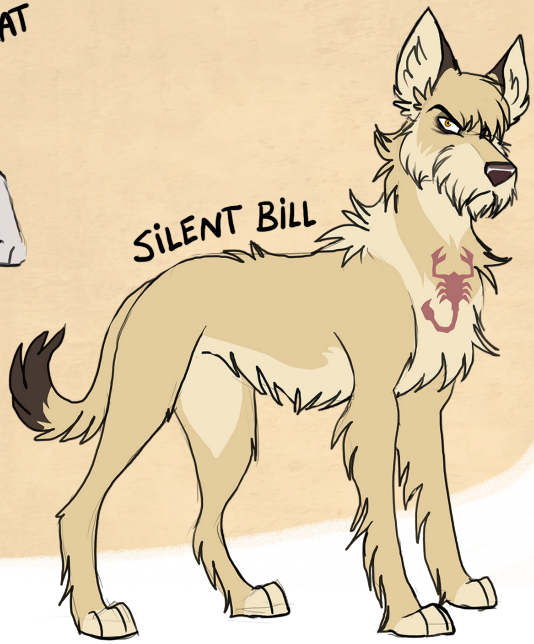


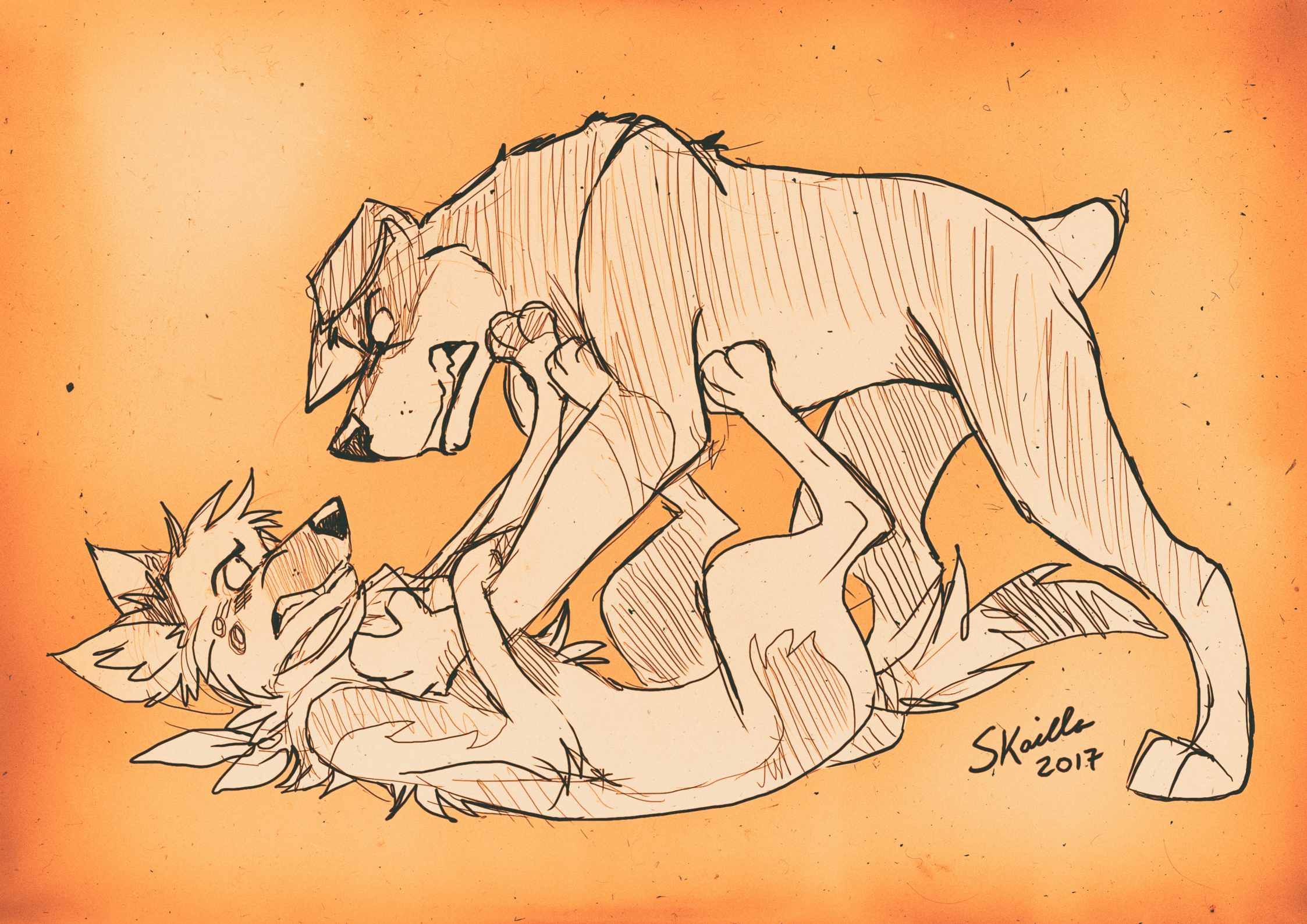
C'MON FAYE, I NEED THAT
NO WAY, IT LOOKS BETTER ON ME!
SKailla 2017

SKailla 2017

THE SCORPIONS






SKaille
2017

THE WILDERNESS

SKaillea
82

THE OLD GHOST OF THE WOODS

When the night falls and the eerie fog rises from the woods, a burning light dances in the darkness. It's the Old Ghost of the Woods, carring his ever-burning lantern through the pine trees . At some point in his life, he was only known as Joe.

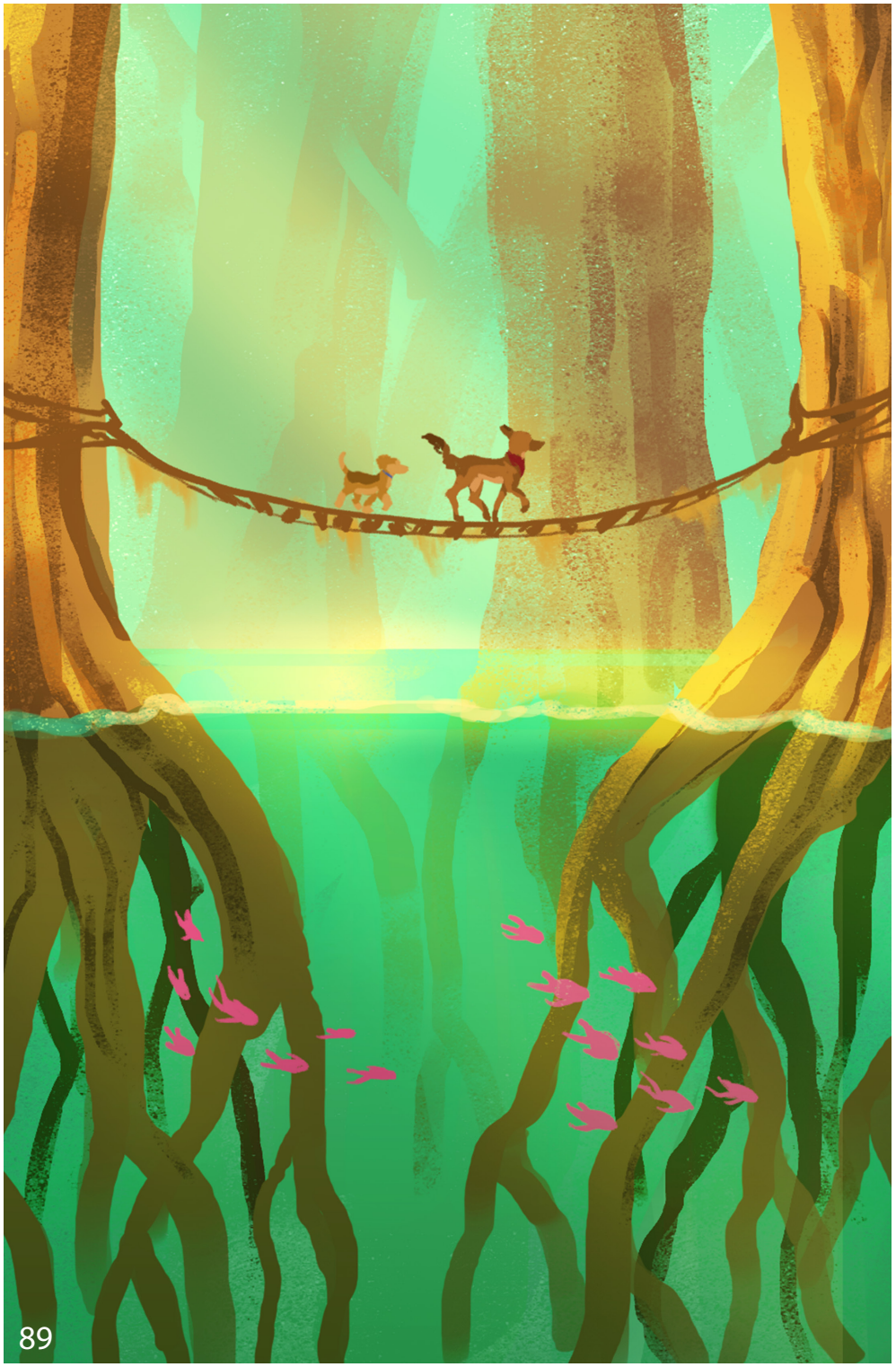
Myths have risen about his strange character, for the townsfolk believe he knows of worlds beyond and the things they dare not talk about. Some say he dances with the ghosts on the other side. Some say he's one of them.

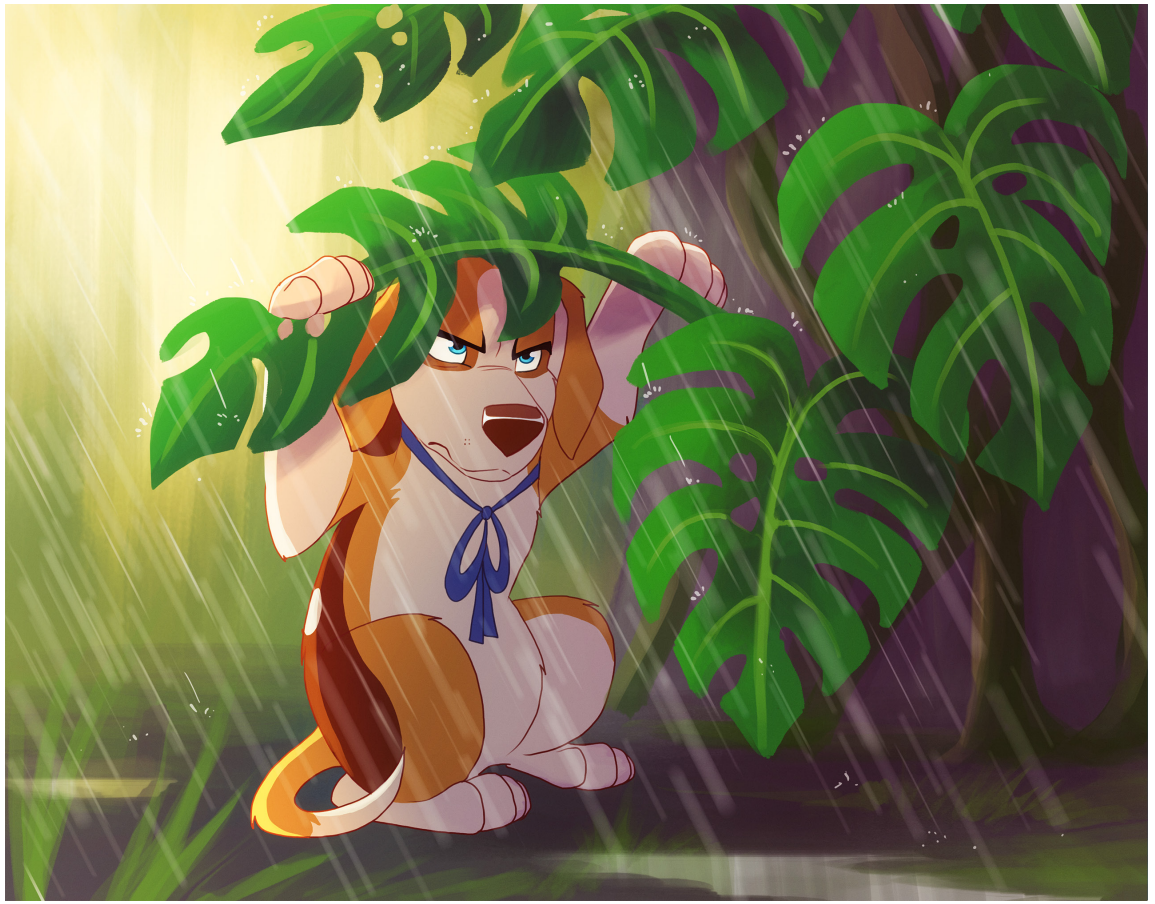
SKaille
2017

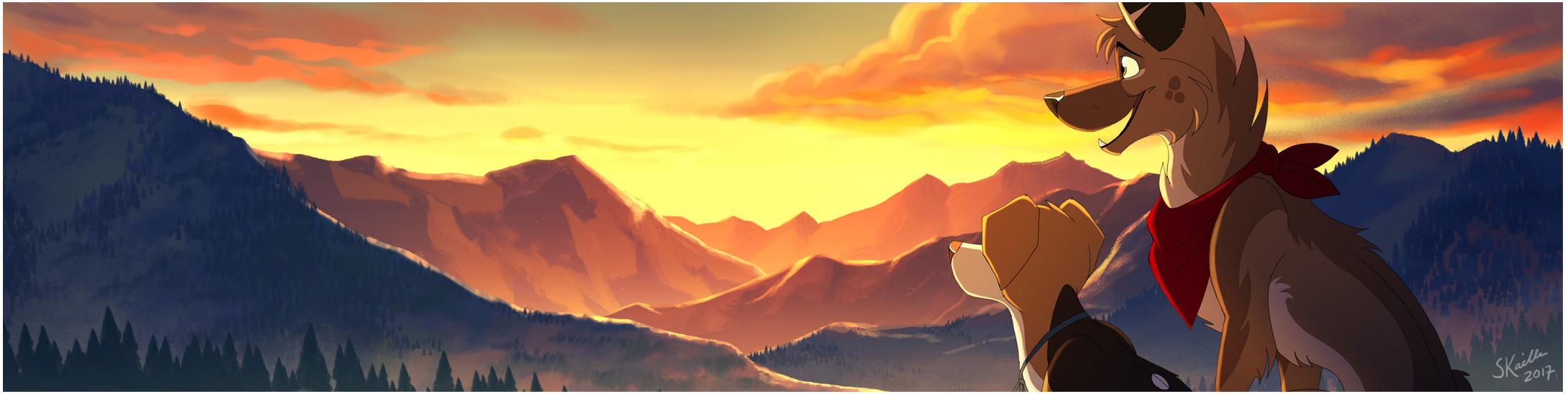
AMAYA?
SKailla
2017

YOU SHOULD NEVER GO NEAR THAT FOG. EVER.

Saudade *is a portuguese word for a deep emotional state of nostalgic or profound melancholic longing for an absent something or someone that one loves. It often carries a repressed knowledge that the object of longing might never return.*






SKailler
2017

Ever tried catching a fish with your own paws?
Ey, Mushie.
Hm? No, I don't think I did.
Then check this out...
HAH! I caught one!
Really?!

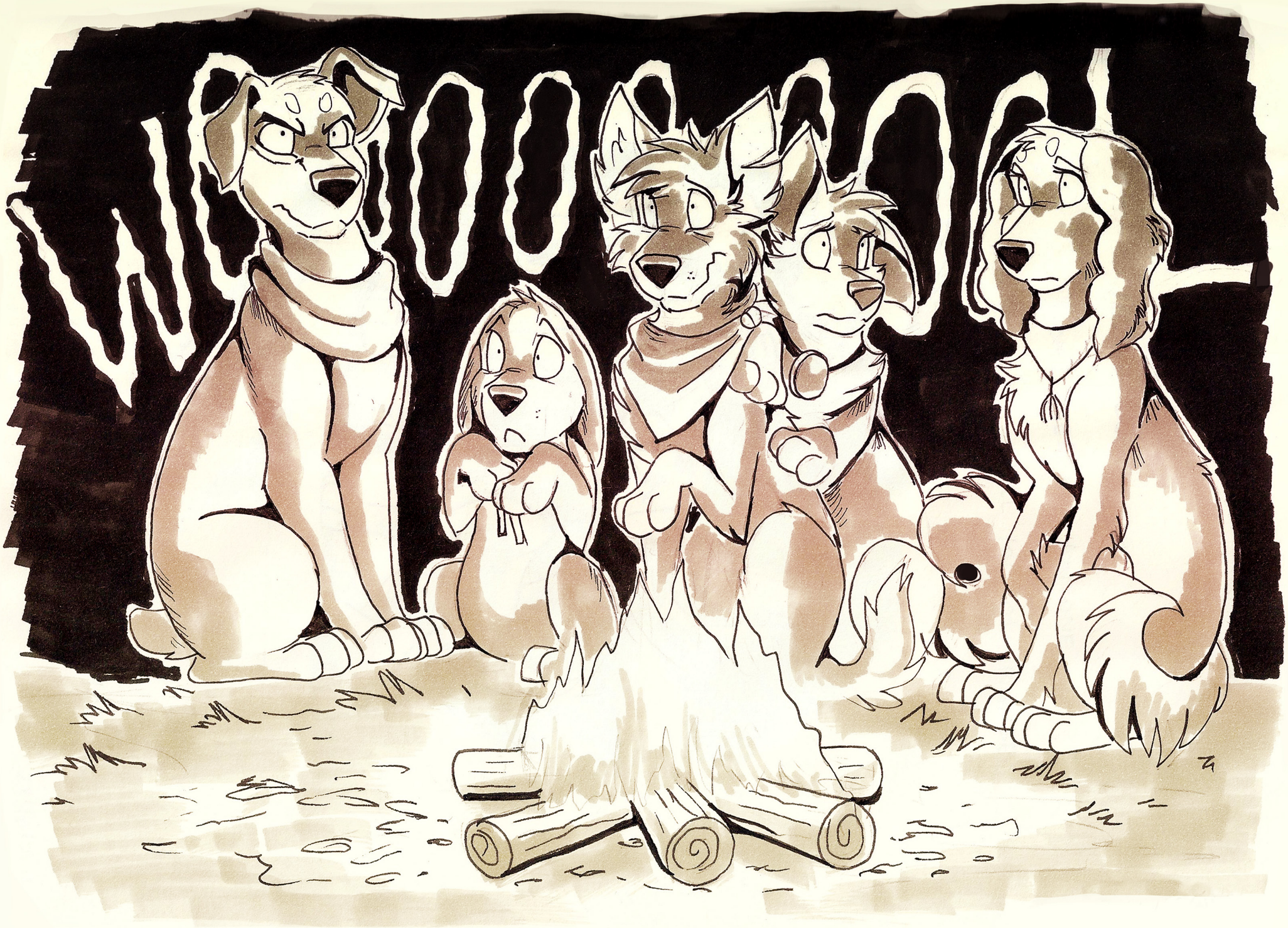
squish!
And it's a feisty one, too!
Oh, yeah? Let me try it!
HAHA!
SPLASH!
HAH! You show him, lassie!

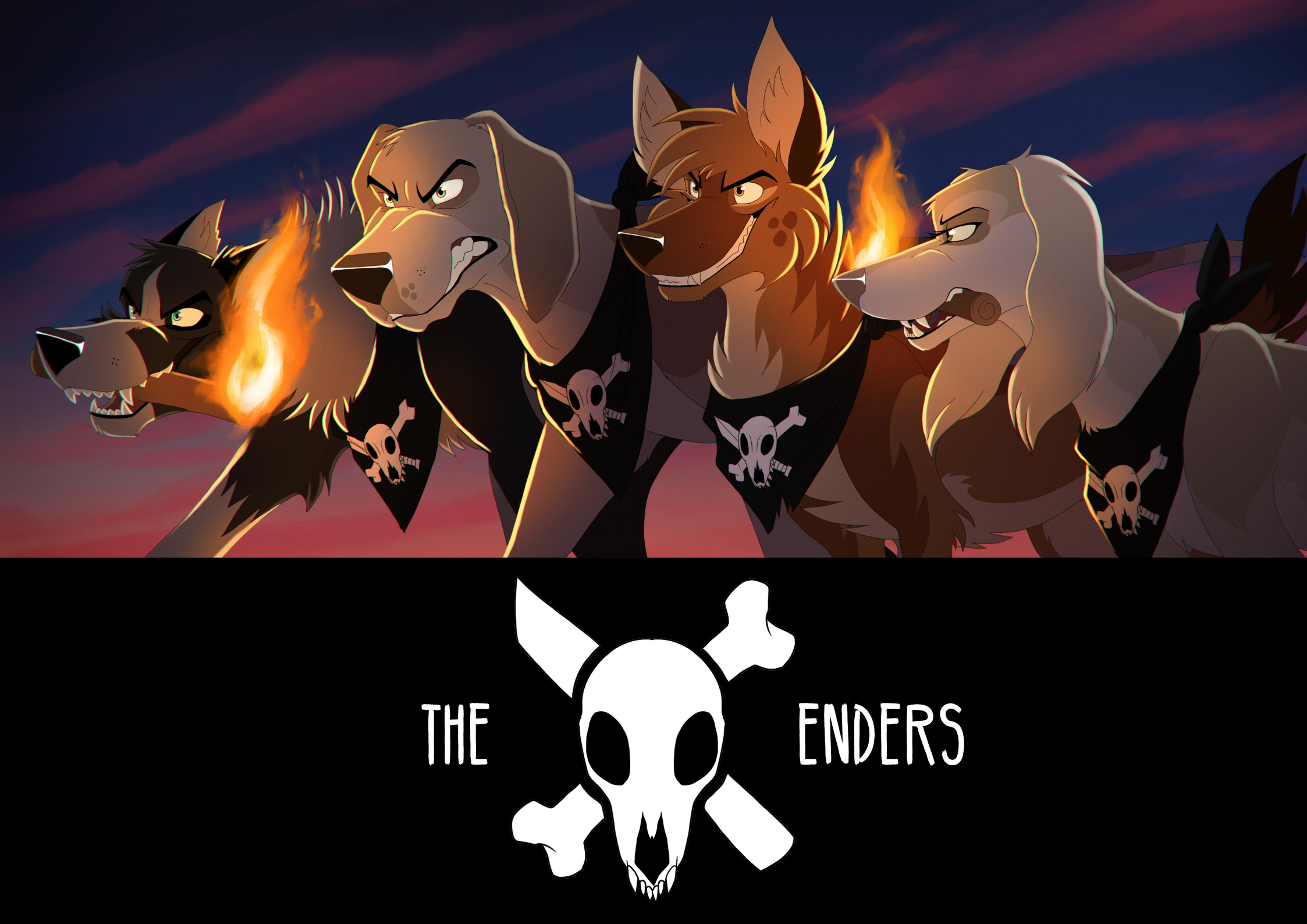
SPLASH!
Alright, I'm down!

My, my!
Looks like I caught that feisty fish after all!
You're getting way too good at this. I better watch out!
You better!

SKaille
2018

SKailla
2017



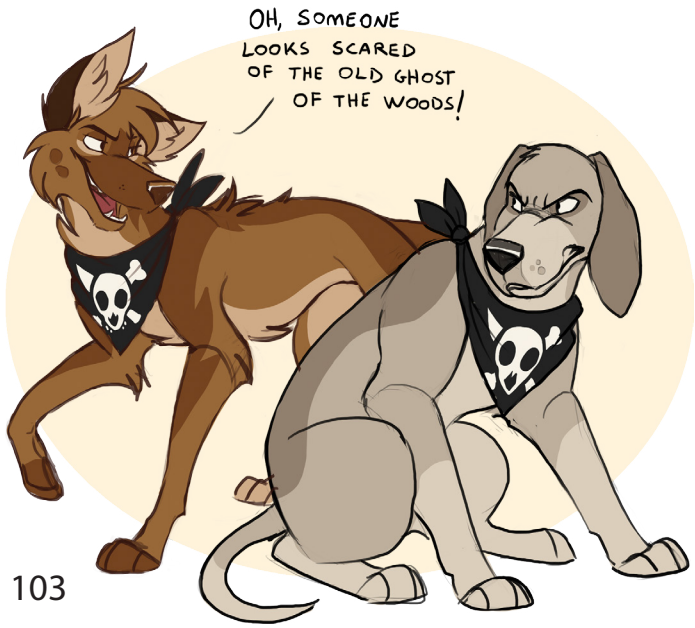

THE
ENDERS

THE OLD GHOST OF THE WOODS
WE SHOULDN'T BE HERE...
RAQUEL 2017
ENDERS

RAQUEL
2017

DON'T OVERDO IT, JENKINS...
HEH HEH...
THIEF!
PST, I'M TELLING YA, THE OUTSIDER IS UP TO SOMETHIN'. I DON'T THRWUST HIM...
BILLY, YOU'RE DRUNK.
WE'LL GET THERE. THE FINAL FRONTIER.

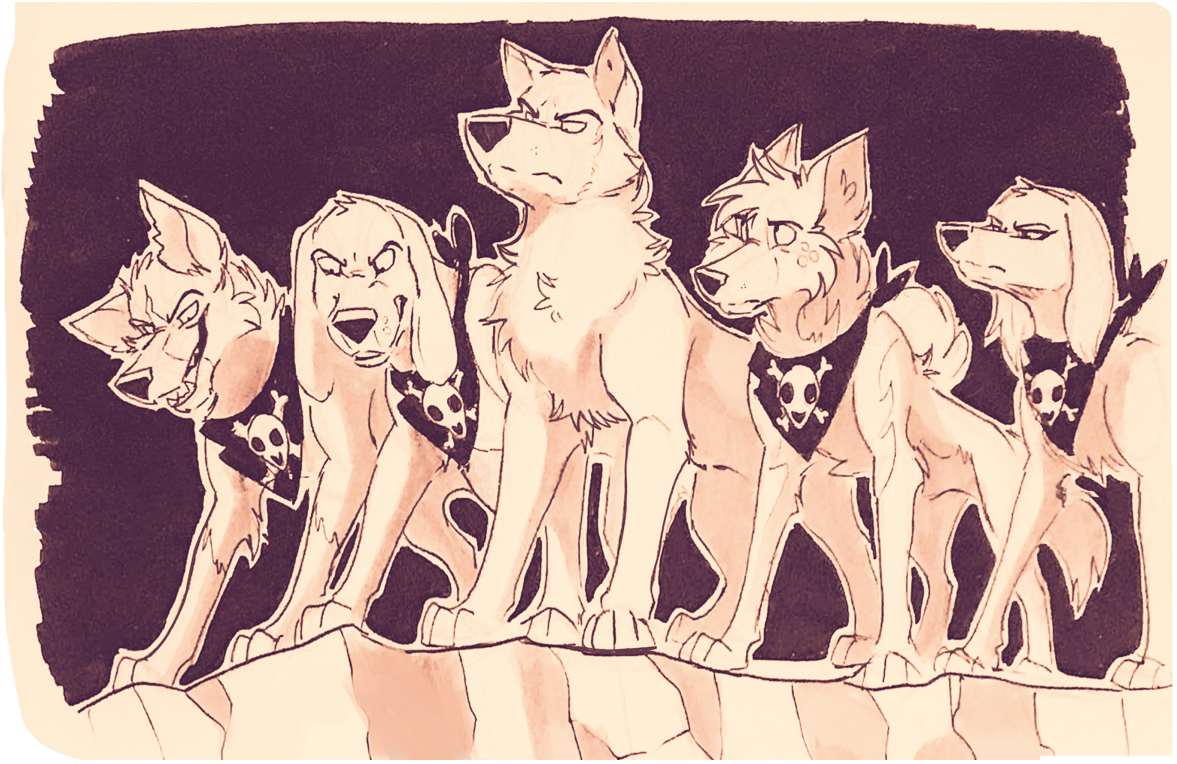
SKailla
2017


OH, SOMEONE LOOKS SCARED OF THE OLD GHOST OF THE WOODS!

OUTSIDER!

?
OH, MY! ARE YOU... KNITTING?!
WOW! THIS LOOKS AWESOME!
DAMN YOU, BONE SACK!
KEEP IT UP!
GET LOST!
SKailla
2018

GET RID OF THAT IDIOT. HE DISTURBS THE ORDER, CAN'T YOU SEE?



STEBAN, WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
AWAY.

WILL YOU COME BACK?

I... DON'T KNOW...

THE UNKOWN

SKaille
2018

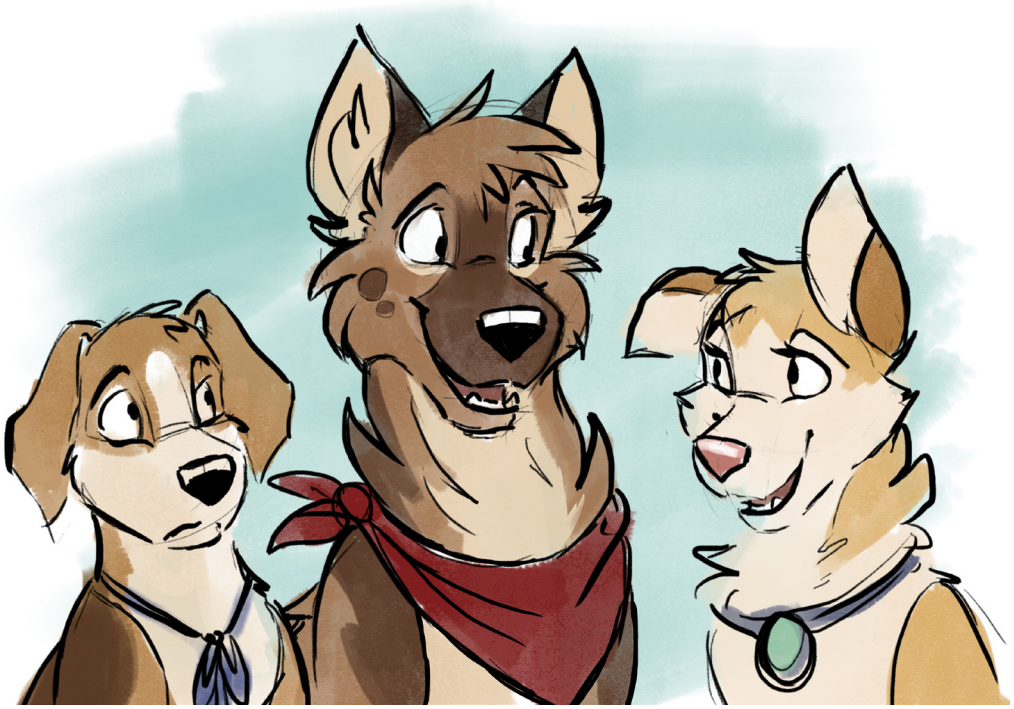
THE WOLVES

Deep into the unexplored woods, a wolf pack takes on the task of keeping the land safe from forces of the unkown. Led by their widowed alpha, Tau, and their Beta, Neya, they strive to keep the wilderness safe from harm – and from unwelcomed strangers.

THE PACK

SKailla
2017

THE SHOWDOWN



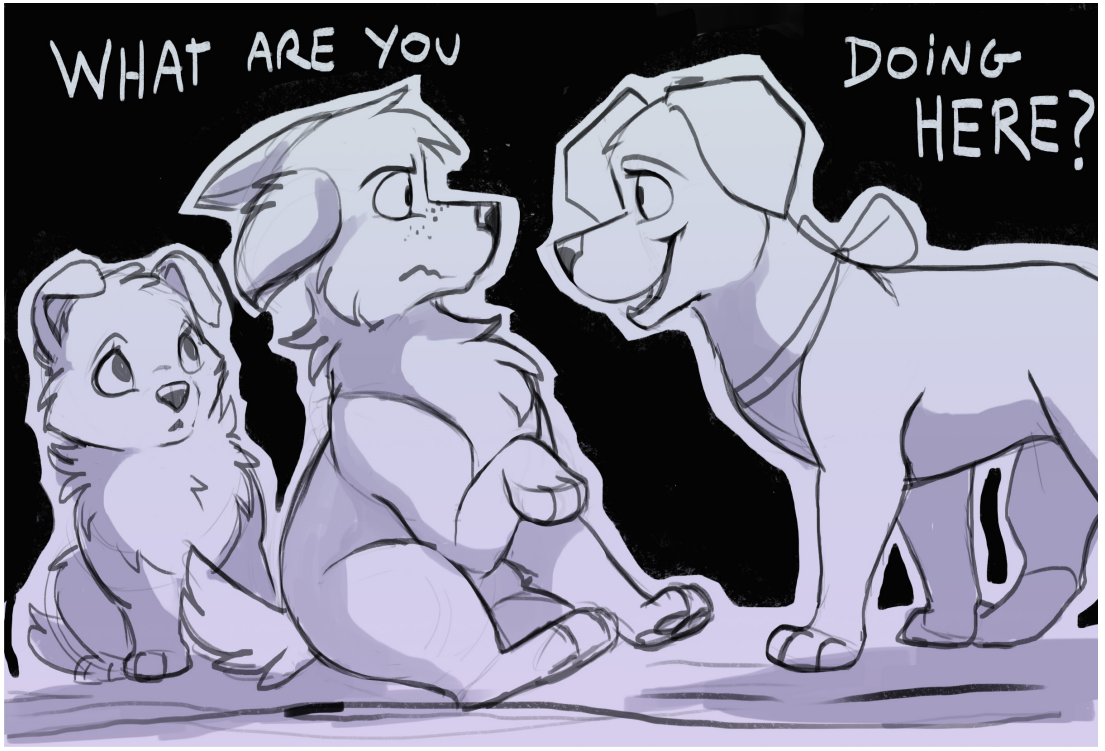
SKaille
2018

You're no coward, kiddo.
You're standing up for what you believe in. That's more than most dogs ever do.
SKaidla 2018

WOW, MUSHIE... YOU LOOK LIKE THE MOST AMAZING SPRING CINNAMON CAKE...
EVELER, I...
WAIT, WHAT?

RENEGADE LOVERS'
DANCE

THE WRITER'S
PLAN
WITCH!

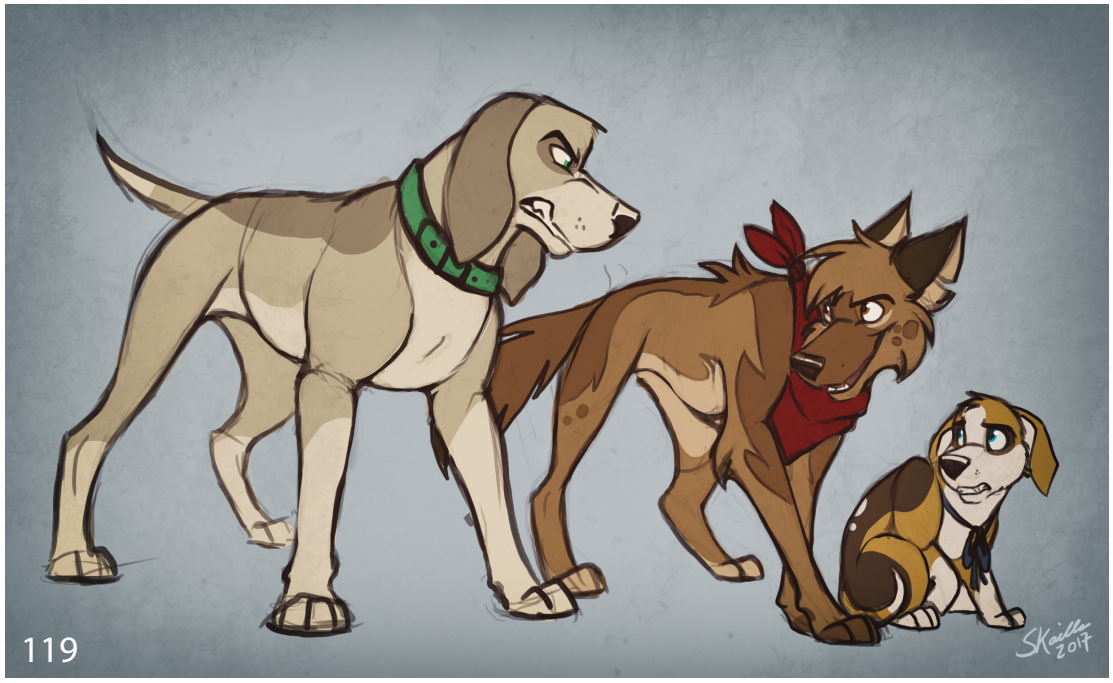

WHAT ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?

YOU SEEM A LITTLE...
LOST.

BALTAZAR
FOR
MAYOR

SKaiilla
2018

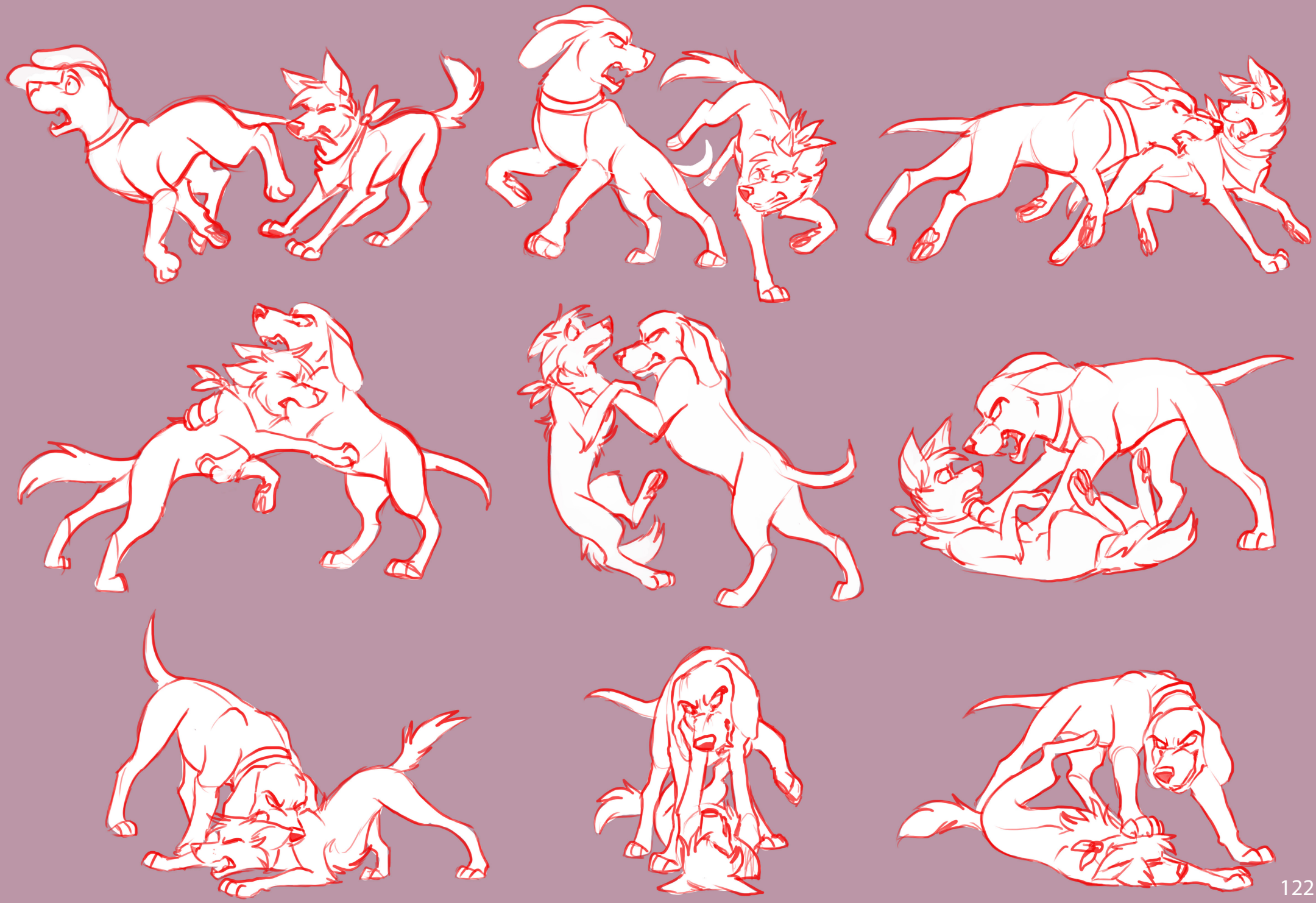
You did
WHAT?
SKaille 2018


SKaille 2017

W-WAiT, PLEASE DON'T GO!
it's FINE.

This is *not* my story. It never was.This is just you dragging me around to fix your stupid mistakes!

SKailee
2018



THE ROPE SUITS YOU.

Catch me if you can!
SKaille
2017

SKaille
2018

SKaiila
2018

Hiding won't change what you are.
SHERIFF

SKaille
2018

SKaille
2018

SO... I GUESS THIS MEANS WE'LL JOURNEY AGAIN OR WHATEVER.

SKaillea
2018

SKaille
2018

SKaiilla
2018

WHICH WAY WILL YOU GO
WHEN YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS?

SKaitlin
2018